

THE UNITED NATIONS ROLE IN RESOLVING FORCED MIGRATION ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT IN 2001-2005

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The paper analyzes the role of the United Nations in resolving the forced migrant crisis on the African continent, as well as the UN's interventions in managing forced migration caused by conflicts in Africa during the early 21st century (folding information, developing long-term memory, highlighting the main idea in small of the text and retelling it).

Keywords: forced migration; refugee crisis; humanitarian assistance; durable solutions; armed conflicts; African Continent; peacekeeping missions; Comprehensive Plans of Action; Zambia Initiative; Convention Plus initiative; Development Assistance for Refugees.

РОЛЬ ООН В РЕШЕНИИ ПРОБЛЕМЫ ВЫНУЖДЕННОЙ МИГРАЦИИ НА АФРИКАНСКОМ КОНТИНЕНТЕ В 2001–2005 ГОДАХ

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В работе анализируется роль ООН в разрешении кризиса вынужденных мигрантов на африканском континенте, а также действия ООН по регулированию вынужденной миграции, вызванной конфликтами в Африке в начале XXI века (складывание информации, развитие долговременной памяти, выделение главной мысли в небольшом тексте и его пересказ).

Ключевые слова: вынужденная миграция; кризис беженцев; гуманитарная помощь; долгосрочные решения; вооруженные конфликты; Африка; миротворческие миссии; Всеобъемлющие планы действий; Замбийская инициатива; инициатива "Конвенция плюс"; помощь в целях развития для беженцев.

Addressing long-standing conflicts and disputes on the African continent has been at the center of the UN's attention for many years. Missions have been deployed in conflict-affected regions to maintain peace, promote political dialogue and support post-conflict reconstruction.

Naturally, the problem of ensuring peace and security in African states became particularly acute in the 1990s and early 2000s, as by that time problems on the African continent, which included popular discontent with government policies, high levels of poverty, ethnic, religious and political divisions, territorial disputes, and struggles over natural resources, began to transform into armed conflicts of varying intensity. Within two decades, the continent has become a major region for crises and armed conflicts with enormous international implications.

The continent's troubled region is North-East Africa. The quarter-century-long conflict in Somalia, the conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia, the border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea that led to war between the two countries at the end of the twentieth century, and several armed conflicts in the Sudan have brought the region to the world's attention. Another conflict region is West Africa, which is among the poorest in terms of per capita income.

UN peacekeeping missions have helped to reduce the level of violence in a number of African countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo, helped to organize and conduct free and fair elections in a number of African countries such as Mozambique, Angola and South Africa, and provided protection to the civilian population. However, it is impossible to speak about the real effectiveness of the UN's actions in this direction. The reliance on the civilian component led to a broadening of the range of tasks that military peacekeepers had to perform in cooperation with civilian observers, such as protection and electoral assistance. This was typical of the missions in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Somalia and Western Sahara.

The early 21st century witnessed a surge in forced migration across Africa. Conflicts in countries like Angola, Sierra Leone, DR Congo, and Burundi displaced millions, creating a complex humanitarian crisis. The United Nations (UN) played a central role in addressing this issue, with various agencies working together to alleviate suffering and find lasting solutions.

This period was marked by a reduction in the number of humanitarian activities undertaken. In view of budgetary constraints, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees focused on initiatives.

UNHCR put forward three concepts for durable solutions. The concepts included Development Assistance for Refugees (DAR); "4Rs" initiative (repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction) and Development through Local Integration (DLI) [1, p. 7].

Development Assistance for Refugees (DAR) was designed to assist refugee-hosting countries to develop and strengthen the capacity of refugees to contribute to local culture while providing them with the necessary opportunities to achieve self-reliance. Such approaches have been applied in Uganda and Zambia [2, c. 6].

“4Rs” initiative included repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction, it’s a strategy that has been embraced by the United Nations system. New efforts to strengthen multilateral ownership of the strategy included the High Commissioner’s Convention Plus initiative as well as the “Dialogue on Voluntary Repatriation and Sustainable Reintegration in Africa,” convened by UNHCR in March 2004. Delegations from African States and other interested Governments, United Nations agencies, international organizations and NGOs agreed that the prevention and resolution of conflict required multidimensional and regional approaches [1, c. 1].

Efforts to encourage local integration and the implementation of self-reliance strategies for refugees have made limited but tangible progress in several areas. In Uganda, for example, in 2003 there was a positive change in the attitude of district authorities towards the Self-Reliance Strategy [3, c. 9].

UNHCR continued to build capacity and encourage the integration of SRS into district development plans through the active participation of all parties, especially the refugee populations and the Government. An outstanding example of Development through Local Integration (DLI) is the Government-led “Zambia Initiative,” which sought to alleviate the combined effects of food deficits, poor infrastructure, and limited access to public services and economic opportunities, for 100,000 refugees. Designed to be sustainable after the eventual phasing out of UNHCR’s involvement, the Initiative demonstrated that these concepts are indeed applicable to the realities of refugee situations and that host governments, donors and agencies working in partnership could generate durable solutions for displaced people [3, c. 9].

The Convention Plus initiative has also progressed in a number of areas, including the provision of a methodology for developing Comprehensive Plans of Action (CPAs) for specific groups of refugees, aimed at achieving durable solutions and enhancing protection [2, c. 7].

With a view to crafting a Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) for Somali refugees, UNHCR has launched a project to explore different aspects of this complex refugee situation in major host countries. It attempted to identify appropriate durable solutions applicable to each Somali refugee sub-group and each host country and, where durable solutions are not immediately available, to identify measures to enhance the quality of asylum in the current host country, including through better legal and physical protection, improved assistance and increased opportunities for refugee self-reliance [2, c. 6].

To conclude from the work done, the most problematic country for refugees on the African continent during the period from 2001-2005 remained Zambia in Southern Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania in the Great Lakes region. In East Africa and the Horn of Africa, the countries with the largest refugee populations were Uganda and Kenya, and in West Africa, Guinea. Overall, the

number of refugees decreased from 3.1 million to 2.5 million. This was achieved through the redistribution of refugees to third countries on the continent. The countries hosting the largest numbers of refugees in Africa were the United Republic of Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan. The countries of origin of the largest refugee populations were Burundi, Sudan and Angola.

By the way, despite its best efforts, UNHCR faced significant challenges during this period. The sheer scale of the refugee crisis often outpaced available resources. Funding constraints limited the scope of assistance, and logistical hurdles complicated the delivery of aid in war-torn regions.

Additionally, UNHCR's ability to influence host governments and warring parties was not always successful, hindering efforts to establish peace and facilitate repatriation.

However, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees served as the lead agency in managing refugee crises. UNHCR established and managed refugee camps, distributed vital supplies like food, water, and sanitation facilities, and provided medical care. Collaboration with NGOs and local governments ensured efficient aid delivery, particularly in remote areas. UNHCR acted as a shield for refugees, safeguarding their basic human rights and safety.

This included monitoring camps for abuses, advocating for their rights with host governments, and documenting human rights violations. Furthermore, UNHCR played a crucial role in negotiating ceasefires and safe passage for refugees fleeing war zones.

Moreover, it's worth saying that the complex nature of the conflicts does not allow a full-fledged resolution of the refugee problem. This includes the negative perception of refugees by the local population, difficult climatic conditions, as well as the lack of real action on the part of the UN in resolving conflicts on the continent.

Despite many endeavours and huge budgetary expenditures to deal with the consequences of conflicts, it would be more prudent to coordinate efforts to finally resolve conflicts on the African continent. Solutions can be found in preventive diplomacy, the promotion of mediation and respect for the provisions of humanitarian law.

Creating security and peace on the continent also requires sustained dialogue at the level of the United Nations, the African Union and other regional organizations. Efforts should be directed towards strengthening local institutions to promote sustainable peace and security. Nevertheless, the UN's role in resolving forced migration in Africa during 2001-2005 was multifaceted and significant. While limitations existed, the UN's efforts provided a foundation for future responses to displacement crises on the African continent and around the world.

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